

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

In the Matter of:ACCIDENT OF THE LADY D
ON MARCH 6, 2004
in Baltimore, Maryland

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Docket No. DCA 04 MM015

Monday,
March 8, 2004

INTERVIEW OF:

ERIC JAHNSEN

PRESENT:

MORGAN J. TURRELL, NTSB
MARIETTE BURER
STEVE ROGERS

P R O C E E D I N G S

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MR. TURRELL: This is Morgan Turrell, with the NTSB. Today's date is Monday, March 8. We are in the hotel room conducting a telephone interview with Mr. Eric Jahnsen. He was a passenger onboard the Seaport Taxi on Saturday, March 6.

With me today, I will let them introduce themselves, please.

MS. BURER: Mariette Burer, I with the NTSB also.

MR. ROGERS: Petty Officer 1st Class Steve Rogers, U.S. Coast Guard Sector, Baltimore, Marine Investigation.

MR. TURRELL: And, Eric, go ahead and introduce yourself.

MR. JAHNSEN: Eric Jahnsen, E-R-I-C, last name, J-A-H-N-S-E-N.

MR. TURRELL: Okay. Sir, and would you please acknowledge this is being recorded?

MR. JAHNSEN: Yes, it is being recorded.

MR. TURRELL: Okay. Thank you.

And, sir, if you would just tell us how old you are?

1 MR. JAHNSEN: Twenty five.

2 MR. TURRELL: Twenty five. And would you
3 please give us your address and telephone number for
4 future contacts.

5 MR. JAHNSEN: (Deleted)

6 MR. TURRELL: Okay. Sir, and would you please
7 tell us a little bit about your background and who you
8 are and where you work?

9 MR. JAHNSEN: Background, originally from
10 California, moved to Florida, came up to Charlotte,
11 North Carolina for college, been here ever since. I
12 work for a national equipment rentals company as a
13 fleet manager now. And that is what brought me to
14 Baltimore in the first place, was the work truck show
15 at the Convention Center downtown.

16 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And how long were you in
17 Baltimore for?

18 MR. JAHNSEN: I was there for a total of three
19 days, two nights.

20 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And what, what led you to
21 ride the Seaport Taxi the day of the accident?

22 MR. JAHNSEN: My fiancée and I had never been
23 to Baltimore, so since I was up there on business, on
24 Friday, anyway, she had come up with me and we actually
25 drove, and stayed for the weekend. And then decided to

1 do some sightseeing, so, Saturday we got kind of a late
2 start out of the hotel, and went out, got on the
3 Seaport Taxi right next to the Constellation. And took
4 that over to Fells Point, which had a transfer from
5 Fells Point over to the Fort.

6 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And can you tell us about
7 what time that was when you got on the first Seaport
8 Taxi to Fells Point?

9 MR. JAHNSEN: Almost two.

10 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And just take us from
11 there and just take us all the way through what
12 happened, leading up to and including and after the
13 accident.

14 MR. JAHNSEN: From when we got on the first
15 water taxi?

16 MR. TURRELL: Yes, please.

17 MR. JAHNSEN: When we got on the first water
18 taxi, we took that over to Fells Point, which then
19 there was another one waiting for us to go over to the
20 Fort. So we got in that one, went over to the Fort,
21 actually on the way over to the Fort, it was the same
22 water taxi we took back, but on the way over there, the
23 water was somewhat choppy, the front end was going
24 under water a little bit. I guess we were heavily
25 weighted on the front end. So, the captain asked the

1 first mate to go stand in the back and a few of us that
2 were sitting there near him, asked if we should also,
3 so we went and stood in the back. Then when we got
4 closer to port, he asked us all to sit down. We docked
5 and got off and looked around the Fort for a little
6 while. And I believe we were there for about an hour
7 and 20 minutes, maybe. And then, is that right, yeah,
8 that is about right. And then got back, went back, we
9 were told that the last boat would be leaving from that
10 area at about 10 to four. So, we got back there. It
11 was the same one we had taken over. And, and there
12 were some dark clouds coming in, and it hadn't started
13 raining. It was somewhat windy at the Fort, but, I
14 assumed that it is always fairly windy at the Fort,
15 since it is out there on the point.

16 And then when we got into the water taxi, it
17 was fully loaded. He actually had to turn some people
18 away from getting on the taxi. We started to pull
19 away, somewhere around maybe 10 til or five til four.
20 And then, and then as we started pulling away, it
21 started raining pretty hard.

22 I do actually, something I remembered that I
23 didn't remember before, which I don't know if it just
24 irony or makes any sense, but, the actual first mate
25 turned around when it started raining and asked if

1 everybody remembered the movie Forest Gump and when the
2 guy tied himself to the mast to get through the storm.

3 So, that was kind of different, but --

4 MR. TURRELL: Someone else mentioned that
5 also.

6 MR. JAHNSEN: Oh, okay.

7 And then I don't, I don't think anybody
8 really laughed that, but, we were kind of surprised
9 that he brought that up. But, then we got out into the
10 Harbor, and it was still raining very hard when we got
11 into the, I guess the middle the Harbor, it seemed like
12 we were about halfway from land on either side, the
13 water was very choppy, and the wind was picking up real
14 hard. Started to, started to rock the boat around a
15 lot, especially, especially on the port side. It was
16 lifting that side up a little bit. At one point a
17 number of us jumped onto the port side from the
18 starboard side including myself, to try to counter
19 balance that wind picking that side up. It, it dropped
20 back down the first time we did that. And then the
21 captain, I don't know if he was turning the boat or if
22 the boat was sliding him, and it was winning, and just
23 the boat sort of turning, but it started to veer right
24 a little bit.

25 I heard somebody, I believe it was the

1 captain, but it could have been the first mate, say
2 that we were going to be looking for the first
3 bulkhead. And then the boat tipped again, a number of
4 us started to jumped onto that side of the boat, to the
5 port side of the boat again, because before we weren't
6 there anymore, because he had asked us to take our
7 seats. When we jumped onto the, that side of the boat
8 again, the boat continued to lift up until it tipped
9 all the way on its side and everybody fell onto the
10 starboard side of the boat, which was now in the water.

11 As soon as that happened, the water rushed in
12 very quickly. I want to say it was, I can't really
13 tell how long each thing happened in here, because of
14 time being relative and I didn't have a watch on. It
15 might have been five seconds that it took that boat to
16 tip over and fully full up with water. A number of, a
17 couple of people, as I understand my fiancée told me
18 that somebody landed on her, which she was laying on a
19 window and that broke that the window, and forced her
20 out of the boat before it had even filled up with
21 water. While I was still inside, the boat filled up
22 with water and while I was inside, I was feeling around
23 on the walls until, I was pushing on the door, because
24 I knew I was, I was sitting right next to the back
25 door, so I was pushing on the door very hard. And then

1 I finally gave up on that and started feeling around on
2 the walls and it, and it felt like I felt some kind of
3 current go out that, where I was just pushing on, so I
4 went back and felt the wall again, and it was open. I
5 don't know that it was a back door, it was somewhat
6 disorienting being turned upside down and being under
7 water and blind. But, I thought I went out the
8 backdoor, especially since when I came up, I ran into
9 the propeller of the boat.

10 But, then knowing that I came up under the
11 propeller, I swam away from that, came up and my
12 fiancée was already on top of the boat, she had already
13 had time to get up over the pilings and crawl on top of
14 the boat. And there were a number of people around in
15 the water still, that hadn't been able to get up yet.
16 And then we actually crawled onto the top of the boat
17 where most people had already gotten on, the people
18 that hadn't, we were helping them get up. And then
19 there was one gentleman who was trying, I don't know if
20 he was going back in, but he was definitely going under
21 water on purpose to try to help anybody that was still
22 trapped. And there was another gentleman that stayed
23 on the outside of the boat, I assumed because he didn't
24 have the energy to try to crawl onto the boat. And he
25 was a larger guy, that I don't know that he really

1 wanted the help to try get up there.

2 But, let's see. After that, we were kind of
3 waving our arms and yelling for help. It seemed like
4 it was maybe five minutes later when we heard the
5 diesel engines turn off on the rescue boat that the
6 Naval Reserve Center had used. We heard that turn on,
7 that started coming out towards us. Then people
8 started yelling that there were still people underneath
9 the boat, which that was actually the first time I had
10 heard that there were still people that were, that
11 hadn't come up yet. And then, and then once the rescue
12 boat got there, and they heard us yelling that there
13 were still people under the boat, a few of the rescue
14 personnel jumped into the boat, or the Naval Reserve
15 officers jumped into the boat, and or jumped into the
16 water, excuse me and started searching. I don't
17 believe they were able to pull out anybody else from
18 inside the boat. But, then they threw a line over to
19 use, they tried to tie their boat up to our, up to the
20 propeller, but the choppy water and the winds kept
21 blowing their boat away from us. But, we saw the rope,
22 so, a number of us grabbed the rope and held onto it
23 and were able to get it around the propeller and able
24 to tie it off. So, they were able to get close enough
25 to us. And we started jumping on the boat.

1 My fiancée was probably the first one onto
2 the rescue boat with me second. And we just ran to the
3 back of the boat, sailed away, and so I don't know what
4 happened with everybody else as far as how fast
5 everybody else got on the boat, but, it seemed they
6 were able to pull us off very quickly.

7 Now, with you guys, should I go into things
8 that were happening on the rescue boat, too?

9 MR. TURRELL: Actually, we will just hold off
10 on that just for a moment here.

11 MR. JAHNSEN: Okay.

12 MR. TURRELL: And we will ask some questions.
13 You have given us a really great statement here. And
14 it is clearing up and confirming some things and ruling
15 other things out. So, I really am happy that we talked
16 to you, Eric. Because it is, you are sort of
17 confirming a lot of, giving me some good investigative
18 directions.

19 Eric, would you just tell me, if you can,
20 where you were sitting on the boat, specifically, which
21 side and how far up fore and aft?

22 MR. JAHNSEN: When it was still upright?

23 MR. TURRELL: Yes.

24 MR. JAHNSEN: We were on the starboard side in
25 aft is the rear section, correct?

1 MR. TURRELL: Yes.

2 MR. JAHNSEN: Yeah, we were, we were all the
3 way in the back. My fiancée was in the corner and I
4 was right next to her on the starboard side.

5 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

6 MR. JAHNSEN: This is when it was upright,
7 correct?

8 MR. TURRELL: Right, that is right.

9 MR. JAHNSEN: Okay.

10 MR. TURRELL: And so, you said that you were
11 one of the people that stood up and moved to the port
12 side, is that correct?

13 MR. JAHNSEN: Yes.

14 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And can you tell me
15 roughly, who the other person was, if you were to count
16 forward, how many, how many spots on the bench the
17 other person had moved also? In other words, we are
18 trying to get a handle on how many people moved to the
19 port side?

20 MR. JAHNSEN: It really seemed like it was
21 more than just two people.

22 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

23 MR. JAHNSEN: I want to say that everybody
24 that did that were men.

25 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

1 MR. JAHNSEN: And it seemed like maybe two or
2 three others, other than myself did that.

3 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

4 MR. JAHNSEN: And I believe the first mate was
5 also one of the people that did it.

6 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

7 MR. JAHNSEN: But, I wasn't really being
8 observant of those other people, when I was jumping to
9 the other side of the boat.

10 MR. TURRELL: Okay. Can you tell me where
11 the, both the operator and the mate were just, just
12 prior to the boat tipping over?

13 MR. JAHNSEN: The operator was at the
14 controls.

15 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

16 MR. JAHNSEN: And the mate was, so his back
17 was to us.

18 MR. TURRELL: Right.

19 MR. JAHNSEN: And the mate was, most of the
20 trip he was, he was facing us, standing kind of
21 diagonally from him, so we could still see the captain.

22 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

23 MR. JAHNSEN: But, he was right next to him
24 still. So, I believe when the boat was ready to tip,
25 he was still facing backward.

1 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And can you tell me how
2 far from that aft door, the mate was standing?

3 MR. JAHNSEN: Oh, he was at the front, so --

4 MR. TURRELL: He was at the front, okay.

5 MR. JAHNSEN: I mean, he was just a few feet
6 away from the front door, I suppose.

7 MR. TURRELL: The mate was.

8 MR. JAHNSEN: Yes.

9 MR. TURRELL: Okay. Okay. And when you boarded
10 the boat, either at two o'clock or at 3:50, did the
11 crew, either the master or the mate discuss safety with
12 you at all?

13 MR. JAHNSEN: I don't recall. I know they did
14 when we boarded at Fells Point to go over to the Fort,
15 they had said the life preservers were under our seats.

16 That is the only thing I do remember them saying as
17 far as safety goes. Now, when we boarded at the Fort,
18 I don't remember but, we were sitting in the back, and
19 I was also carrying on a conversation with my fiancée,
20 so I might have not been paying attention to something
21 that I should have.

22 MR. TURRELL: Okay. So, also did you note if
23 the life preservers were indeed under the seats or any
24 other location?

25 MR. JAHNSEN: They were indeed under the

1 seats.

2 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

3 MR. JAHNSEN: I believe that is the only place
4 they were. I remembered in the first water taxi that
5 we took, they had child life preservers above and the
6 others were below. But, that was a much, that was a
7 very different boat compared to the one that flipped
8 over. So, I believe that all of the life preservers
9 were under the seats on this one.

10 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And the canopy of the boat
11 and when the boat turned over, it sounds like the
12 canopy was still in place, is that correct?

13 MR. JAHNSEN: That is correct.

14 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And so, also to just recap
15 what you said, the boat was lifting, the port side was
16 lifting up, and it did so once or twice before the boat
17 finally tipped over?

18 MR. JAHNSEN: It was, it was rocking a lot.

19 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

20 MR. JAHNSEN: So, to say that it, you know, I
21 guess you just base that on the degree that it was
22 lifting.

23 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

24 MR. JAHNSEN: The one time it seemed to lift
25 an awful lot more than the rest of the times that were

1 considered rocking.

2 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And can you perhaps tell
3 me when you first felt any sort of concern or alarm for
4 your own personal safety? At what point did you
5 initially --

6 MR. JAHNSEN: I think the first time that I
7 jumped onto the port side was, was definitely when I
8 became worried about the boat and it being able to make
9 it to its destination.

10 MR. TURRELL: Okay. Now, was that an instinct
11 of yours or were you instructed to do that?

12 MR. JAHNSEN: Just an instinct, you know, I
13 mean, you are out in the middle of the water and, and
14 you actually have to try to adjust the weight by using
15 passengers to move them around.

16 MR. TURRELL: Sure.

17 MR. JAHNSEN: Kind of makes you feel a little
18 uneasy about being on the vessel.

19 MR. TURRELL: Okay. So, did the mate ever
20 instruct you to either move to offset the weight or to
21 move back to your seats?

22 MR. JAHNSEN: Yeah, he did ask us to move back
23 to our seats after that, first time that we had jumped
24 onto the port side.

25 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And by you moving over,

1 did it definitely make a difference when you shifted
2 over?

3 MR. JAHNSEN: Well, we didn't flip that time,
4 so, I mean, I think it might have, but, of course, when
5 we did end up flipping, a couple of us did try to jump
6 onto the port side again.

7 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

8 MR. JAHNSEN: And didn't really matter,
9 because we all just fell back onto the other side.

10 MR. TURRELL: Okay. I have one last question
11 for you. When the boat started actually, when the
12 final time when it tipped, my picture of what you told
13 me was that the boat flipped up and was vertically
14 laying on its starboard side and sank sort of laying
15 off of starboard side, sinking down sideways, or did it
16 actually turtle over?

17 MR. JAHNSEN: It kind of just, it kind of just
18 did a full turn. It, you know, I suppose the pontoon
19 on, that was now the only one that was in the water,
20 kept that side from going under water. But, you know,
21 the fact that the wind was still blowing and pushing it
22 down, and the water rushing in, it just did a, it just
23 did a full 180 degree turn.

24 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

25 MR. JAHNSEN: To where it, it was, there was

1 so many ways for water to get into the inside that it
2 rushed in very quickly.

3 MR. TURRELL: Okay. Okay. So, it really was a
4 smooth 180 degree rollover, rather than a, that was,
5 the outside began sinking and then flipped over.

6 MR. JAHNSEN: It flipped onto the starboard
7 side.

8 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

9 MR. JAHNSEN: Quicker than it sank.

10 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

11 MR. JAHNSEN: That is what it seemed like.

12 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

13 MR. JAHNSEN: So, it flipped over there, hit
14 the water, we all fell to that side, there was already
15 a lot of water inside, and then and then it, in the
16 next few seconds it seemed like it was fully under
17 water.

18 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And I am going to allow
19 the other NTSB investigator ask you questions about the
20 rescue sequence.

21 MR. JAHNSEN: Okay.

22 MR. TURRELL: If you would perhaps want to
23 tell her just, starting from the time of the accident
24 to the rescue sequence, and then Mariette will ask you
25 questions about that. Okay.

1 MR. JAHNSEN: So from where I left off before
2 or from where we heard the engines turn on at the --

3 MR. TURRELL: Oh, no, no, from the point of
4 the --

5 MR. JAHNSEN: Where they tied up to us?

6 MR. TURRELL: Yes, that is right.

7 MR. JAHNSEN: Okay.

8 (Pause.)

9 MR. JAHNSEN: Okay. So, when we had finally
10 gotten their boat tied up to ours and we started
11 jumping onto their boat, I was, I believe the second
12 person off of the pontoon boat, because I was sitting
13 right next to the propeller where they had tied up to,
14 initially. Then they were pulling everybody else off,
15 helping everybody quickly get off that, the pontoon
16 boat. Once we were inside, they were also trying to
17 get us warm, taking care of the people who were
18 injured. There was somebody sitting hear us who had
19 dislocated her arm or shoulder. There were also, it
20 seemed that people were very cold and were having
21 trouble moving at all, let alone get up enough energy
22 to get off the boat and onto the Navy vessel.

23 Once onto the rescue boat, I didn't really
24 catch a lot of things going on other than hearing from
25 people that they were missing family members and that

1 there were people missing, that still hadn't come up.
2 After, after some time there was, it seemed that they
3 were able to tie up the boat to the tail that moves up
4 and down on this boat. And they were able to lift the
5 tail up to actually life the boat out of the water
6 some. At that point it appeared that, at least two
7 people came floating out of the boat, or were at least
8 noticed in the water once that happened. Because I
9 only saw, I say at least two people, because I only saw
10 two people get brought onto the rescue ship after that
11 happened. A young girl and another adult, which I saw
12 they were performing CPR on that adult on the tail of
13 the boat. And that was far from where I was. The
14 little girl was up near the control center of the Naval
15 rescue boat and, and, so that was pretty close to where
16 I was and they were performing CPR on her as well.

17 The next thing I knew the Coast Guard was, it
18 looked like they were trying to tie off to the
19 starboard side of the Naval boat, where they could try
20 to get these people who they were performing CPR on off
21 the boat and to the hospital or to safer conditions.
22 So, as I understand the little girl was taken. I don't
23 know at which point the adult that was down on the tail
24 of the boat was taken. I don't know, if she was taken
25 by the, by the Coast Guard or they waited until we got

1 into, into port to actually take her off.

2 But, we were constantly being checked on.
3 People were giving us their own clothes to try get, to
4 help us stay warm until we got back into the Naval
5 Reserve Center.

6 Once we got into the Naval Reserve Center, we
7 quickly unloaded the boat. There were a number of
8 ambulances already waiting. We got inside, they
9 brought out heaters for us, a lot of dry clothing. A
10 number of people needed medical attention before myself
11 and my fiancée, so, there was a number of people who
12 had, I guess dropped some body temperature and needed
13 some help, so, we were kind of just staying out of the
14 way, and staying close to a heater and, and was just
15 trying to stay warm as it seemed that, it seemed that
16 small groups had their own people kind of standing near
17 them to make sure that everything was okay with those
18 people. So, I was talking to the same few people with
19 the Naval Reserve Center most of that time that we were
20 there.

21 How much more do I need to go into on the
22 rescue efforts?

23 MS. BURER: If you can just keep going,
24 whatever you can remember and tell, that would be
25 wonderful.

1 MR. JAHNESEN: Just keep going past that?

2 MS. BURER: Yes, if you would like, all the
3 way up to the hospital.

4 MR. JAHNESEN: Okay. Okay. I will keep going.

5 All right, so when that happened, we were, I
6 believe we were one of the last couple of people that
7 were taken out of the Naval Reserve Center, like I
8 said, we really didn't suffer any major injuries. I
9 have a few scratches on my hands and some just sore
10 bruises and things from being rolled around inside the
11 boat. But, the, my fiancée, Sarah, was taken out on a
12 stretcher, put into an ambulance, I rode in the
13 ambulance with her to Johns Hopkins. I believe it was
14 University Hospital or just Johns Hopkins Hospital. And
15 then while there, we were triage and put into a room
16 where a doctor saw us and talked to us, a social worker
17 came up to us, talked to us, asked us if she needed to
18 call any family members for us. They let us use their
19 phones, checked us out, got all the information. They
20 ended up even calling a taxi for us, but we were told
21 by the police officer that was there, that we needed to
22 talk to someone back at the Command Center, which was
23 back at the Naval Reserve Station.

24 So, then we were taken, actually we had some
25 box lunches given to us by the hospital, which we ate,

1 and by the time we were done eating, the person to take
2 us back to the Command Center was there. She took us
3 back, we talked to two people from the Coast Guard
4 about the, the situation, and wrote down a statement on
5 what we could remember about how that boat tipped over.
6 And then we were taken back to our hotel room.

7 MS. BURER: Okay. Do you recall at all when
8 the Naval Reserve came out to rescue you in the very
9 beginning, do you remember how many people were on that
10 boat to rescue you?

11 MR. JAHNESEN: Oh, there was --

12 MS. BURER: The Naval reserves?

13 MR. JAHNESEN: There was probably three of
14 them for every one of us.

15 MS. BURER: Okay. And then was everyone able
16 to get back on one boat or were there several different
17 parties involved, meaning fire department, or police
18 department or any of that, or was it just the Naval
19 Reserve?

20 MR. JAHNESEN: Well, we all got onto the Naval
21 Reserve boat.

22 MS. BURER: Okay.

23 MR. JAHNESEN: I didn't see anybody get off
24 that boat other than the little girl who needed medical
25 attention immediately. And the Coast Guard was there,

1 I want to say a few minutes after the Naval Reserve
2 boat first got there for us.

3 MS. BURER: Okay.

4 MR. JAHNESEN: We might have, I don't remember
5 seeing the Coast Guard boats until we were, until I was
6 on the Naval boat.

7 MS. BURER: Okay.

8 MR. JAHNESEN: And I don't recall seeing the
9 fire rescue boats.

10 MS. BURER: Okay. Okay. And then everyone was
11 already at, on the scene, I guess, if that is what you
12 want to call, waiting for you all, with the ambulance
13 drivers, to be able to take you all to the hospital
14 right after performing triage?

15 MR. JAHNESEN: After performing triage, well,
16 we were, yeah, I suppose we were triaged in the Naval
17 Reserve Center as well, because they did come over and
18 take our blood pressure.

19 MS. BURER: Okay.

20 MR. JAHNESEN: So, yes.

21 MS. BURER: Okay.

22 MR. JAHNESEN: There were a few, there was,
23 well, I will say at least one ambulance waiting there
24 at the Naval Reserve Station already when we got off,
25 at the port there.

1 MS. BURER: Okay. I don't have any other
2 questions. I don't know if anyone else does.

3 MR. TURRELL: Yes, Steven Rogers from the
4 U.S. Coast Guard will be next.

5 MR. ROGERS: Steven Rogers from the Coast
6 Guard, once again, like Mr. Turrell said, for a great
7 interview, probably one of the best ones I have ever
8 sat on after a casualty and I have done a few. And it
9 is really beneficial that you remember as much as you
10 do and you know, you have got really good information.

11 I just have one question. At any time during
12 any of the trips you took to Fells Point or to the Fort
13 or when you got back out and you came back over, was
14 there any point that you noticed the operator had any
15 problems with the vessel prior to the weather getting
16 severe?

17 MR. JAHNESEN: Just that time when we went
18 from Fells Point over to the Fort, when the boat seemed
19 to be having trouble getting through the water because
20 the water was coming up over the front of the boat.
21 And we moved to the back of the boat to stand, to stand
22 at the back of the boat so the front end could get out
23 of the water a little bit. And that was in the same
24 boat that we took back from the Fort that ended up
25 capsizing.

1 MR. ROGERS: Besides the stability issues
2 with, you know, with the roughness of the water, the
3 captain never had any problems say making his approach
4 to the pier? Did it seem like he had good maneuver
5 ability when the water was calm?

6 MR. JAHNESEN: Yeah, I don't, I don't really
7 think the water was calm at all going from Fells Point
8 to the Fort. It was, it was fairly choppy even on the
9 way over. He didn't seem to have trouble getting over
10 there other than the fact that we had to distribute
11 some weight. When we got over there, it was fairly
12 windy, which I had never been there before, I had
13 assumed this was kind of common practice, but it was
14 kind of fairly windy, so, he, he struck the pier a
15 little harder than I guess I was used to being on those
16 types of boats, but, for the conditions and being so
17 windy, and there being the fire rescue boats to our
18 starboard side and another vessel to the port side, he
19 kind of had to get in there and make sure that, that he
20 didn't hit any of the other vessels that were around at
21 that port or at that dock.

22 MR. ROGERS: That is it for me.

23 MR. TURRELL: Okay. I can just think of a
24 couple of questions. Did you ever notice any children
25 on the boat as to where they were on the boat, this

1 taxi? Just before leaving the fort on the accident
2 trip?

3 MR. JAHNESEN: I, I am not absolutely
4 positive. I think I remember seeing a child forward,
5 port side.

6 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

7 MR. JAHNESEN: But, I am not positive. There
8 wasn't one sitting next to me in the back and there
9 wasn't one sitting across from me in the back. But, I
10 do remember, I do, I do remember them getting on. I
11 just don't remember where they sat.

12 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And --

13 MR. JAHNESEN: It seemed like, well, you know,
14 when we got in, my fiancée gets somewhat nervous about
15 just about anything, I guess. But, when we got onto
16 that boat because of the weight distribution problems
17 that we had on the way over, we sat in the back
18 automatically this time. And, and when we were loading
19 the boat at Fort McHenry, I seem to remember a large
20 gentleman getting on one of the last people, and
21 thinking, I wanted him on my side because it seemed
22 like we didn't have very much weight. So, which
23 didn't work out so well, considering the port side was
24 the one that was, was, but, maybe that was because
25 there were kids on our side. I am not real sure where

1 the kids were.

2 MR. TURRELL: Okay. So it was just a general
3 sense there was perhaps there was an imbalance between
4 the sides?

5 MR. JAHNESEN: It seemed, when we were
6 actually getting loaded up, it seemed like we didn't
7 have enough weight on our side. But, that doesn't, I
8 guess then when we were fully loaded, it didn't really
9 matter, because there were, there was, I mean, 25
10 people on the boat, I guess, so, that is, so it was
11 fully loaded and I guess it wouldn't really matter.

12 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And the last question,
13 how much, for me anyway, how much boating background or
14 maritime kind of experience do you have around boats?

15 MR. JAHNESEN: Well, when I was a kid, I used
16 to sail fairly often in Southern California. But, I
17 was very young then. I have always done a lot of
18 canoeing. And recently kayaking and scuba diving have
19 been water sports that I have, am fairly involved in.

20 MR. TURRELL: Okay. And do you attribute your
21 experience from these small crafts and scuba diving to
22 your survival?

23 MR. JAHNESEN: I think that part of, part of
24 my survival was to due to the fact that I am very used
25 to being in the water. I am comfortable being in the

1 water.

2 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

3 MR. JAHNESEN: Being in a kayak and flipping
4 over in a roaring river, is, is definitely terrifying.
5 And I think that is probably what I could compare it
6 to.

7 MR. TURRELL: Right. Did you at any time grab
8 onto a life preserver or see one floating in the water?

9 MR. JAHNESEN: I did not grab onto a life
10 preserver. When the boat first flipped, they were
11 floating around inside the boat for that, for a split
12 second, because things had moved around, but, I started
13 to grab for one, but, it filled up with water so
14 quickly that I realized I needed to find a way out
15 instead of grabbing a life preserver and getting stuck
16 under water.

17 MR. TURRELL: Okay. I think Mariette has one
18 follow up question.

19 MS. BURER: Yes. I have a question regarding
20 the jumping up to the starboard side. Just to clarify
21 in my own mind, this happened twice, right? The second
22 time --

23 MR. JAHNESEN: Well, you know, there were,
24 there were at least a few people on the, well, we were
25 jumping onto the port side, but, there were at least a

1 few people on the starboard side that were, you know,
2 on the edge of their seat ready to jump back onto that
3 side, because we had already been asked to take our
4 seats after the first time that it seemed like the boat
5 was going. So, we had jumped onto that side, decided
6 to stay there, and then they asked us to take our seats
7 again. So, we sat down. And as the boat kept rocking,
8 we kind of started going over there again, but didn't
9 quite go over there, and then, and then once it really
10 started to lift, we tried to jump to that side again,
11 and that is when it just kept going.

12 MS. BURER: Do you have an estimate or a
13 feeling to how much time had elapsed between the two?

14 MR. JAHNESEN: I want to say it was less than
15 a minute.

16 MS. BURER: Okay. Okay. And then the other
17 thing that I kind of, when you described about the
18 boats that or the previous boats you had taken, that
19 they were very different. Can you clarify what you
20 mean by that as far as was it condition or signs or any
21 of that stuff?

22 MR. JAHNESEN: Well, the boat that we took
23 from the, from being next to the Constellation in the
24 Harbor, I am talking about the old, old war wooden boat
25 that was, old Naval boat, that is out there in the

1 Harbor.

2 MR. TURRELL: Right.

3 MS. BURER: Right.

4 MR. JAHNESEN: From there to Fells Point was a
5 boat that probably had a capacity of somewhere near
6 twice what this one did. All the seats were kind of
7 cushioned in soft plastic or vinyl. And it was, it
8 seemed like it was a newer vessel. It also had some
9 type of a, I believe it was a cloth canopy on it. And
10 I think the sides were open. I don't think there was
11 glass or anything around the sides. So, it was really
12 more of a, more of like a party boat, if you understand
13 what I am saying with the pontoon boat.

14 MS. BURER: Okay.

15 MR. JAHNESEN: In Charlotte where I live, we
16 have all these lakes, so there are always people with
17 pontoon boats out on the water, and it is, it was more
18 like that than it was this other, this other one that
19 we took from Fells Point to the Fort and then halfway
20 back. The one that we took from the Fort, well, on the
21 way over to the Fort, a screw popped out of the floor
22 and water started seeping in, and it would actually
23 shoot up like a small geyser out of the middle of the
24 floor. And then, and then on the way back sitting in
25 the back, I noticed that one of the, one of the walls

1 next to the exit door in the back was not, didn't look
2 like it was bolted on the bottom brace at all, because
3 I could actually see it waving in the wind a little
4 bit, at the bottom. The seats in it were all wood.
5 They were really hard. It looked like it was maybe
6 two, two by eights, put together, something like that,
7 for the seats which ran along both walls. Whereas, the
8 pontoon boat from the Constellation to Fells Point, was
9 cushioned seats and there was also a center row of
10 seats and then seats on both walls. And so, so, it was
11 a larger boat that was the first one that we were on
12 as well.

13 MS. BURER: Right.

14 MR. TURRELL: Eric, would you like to perhaps
15 clarify what you just mentioned about the bulkheads on
16 the taxi that flipped over? Could you clarify a little
17 bit about that?

18 MR. JAHNESEN: The bulkheads on the taxi?

19 MR. TURRELL: You just said the walls maybe
20 had come loose or something.

21 MR. JAHNESEN: Oh, well, just, well, they
22 didn't come loose, just sitting at port waiting for the
23 boat to load, I just noticed that the wall next to the
24 door sill, actually on the starboard, no, the port side
25 of the aft door, at the bottom where it looked like,

1 where it looked like the wall might have been riveted
2 to a steel brace, square, like a one inch square steel
3 brace that went around, it did not look like it was
4 connected at all to the bottom. Just things I noticed
5 as far as things started to kind of come apart on the
6 boat.

7 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

8 MR. ROGERS: How about that screw in the deck,
9 with the gush, do you remember --

10 MR. JAHNESEN: The screw in the deck, the deck
11 was like a diamond plating but it had some kind of, I
12 think, thick, thick -- on it, so to touch it, it almost
13 seemed rubber like, maybe the deck was even a hard
14 rubber. I wasn't sure, but it looked like a diamond
15 plated metal for the deck. Now where two pieces of,
16 where there was a cease in the diamond plating, where
17 two pieces came together, going, going across the deck,
18 there were screws in both those pieces of metal, which
19 I assumed would brace that diamond plating to an
20 underside brace. And one of those screws on the way
21 over to the Fort, just popped right out, and water
22 started spurting through that little hole. It seemed
23 like that water would only spurt through when maybe a
24 waver would hit us, would hit the bottom of the boat
25 and then it would spurt through. But, and it didn't

1 seem to be, it was definitely nothing that was going to
2 make the boat sink, since the pontoon was holding it up
3 in the first place. But, there was water spurting up
4 through the little hole right in the center of the
5 deck. And that was more near the, maybe the back third
6 of the boat. I think, I am fairly sure it was, it was
7 definitely in the rear section because while standing
8 in the rear section, it was right in front of me.

9 MR. TURRELL: Okay.

10 MR. ROGERS: Did you notice if, did you notice
11 that on the way back from the Fort at all?

12 MR. JAHNESEN: I noticed the screw was not in
13 the hole, and it was not on the floor anymore. I did
14 not notice water spurting through the hole.

15 MR. ROGERS: At any time did you notice the
16 captain or the mate acknowledge that or did they ever
17 notice it?

18 MR. JAHNESEN: I don't recall. Everybody, it
19 seemed like everybody on the boat was watching the
20 little geyser in the middle of the floor on the way
21 over to the Fort. I don't know how the first mate
22 would have not noticed that. The captain seemed pretty
23 intent both ways at watching what he was doing. So, I
24 don't, I don't believe he noticed it on the way over.

25 MR. TURRELL: Okay. I have no more questions,

1 Eric.

2 Mariette?

3 MS. BURER: I have none. Thank you for all
4 your help.

5 MR. JAHNESEN: Okay. Sure.

6 MR. TURRELL: Well, we do have an interview
7 set up with, I think, Sarah, is her name?

8 MR. JAHNESEN: Okay. Yes.

9 MR. TURRELL: Tomorrow at nine.

10 MR. JAHNESEN: Okay.

11 MR. TURRELL: And we really appreciate both of
12 your cooperation on this.

13 MR. JAHNESEN: Sure.

14 MR. TURRELL: If you have any questions, I
15 will probably calling to follow up when the transcript
16 is completed.

17 MR. JAHNESEN: Okay.

18 MR. TURRELL: And I will let you know, I can
19 send you a copy or answer any questions you have.

20 MR. JAHNESEN: I do have one quick question.

21 MR. TURRELL: Sure.

22 MR. JAHNESEN: We have had just an
23 overwhelming number of media calls.

24 MR. TURRELL: Yes.

25 MR. JAHNESEN: And I assume that is because

1 somehow they found Sarah's name out from someone and,
2 and, then they were camped outside her parent's place
3 when we got to Raleigh on our drive back. On the way
4 back to Charlotte. So, that is how I ended up doing
5 an interview on TV. When these people are calling us,
6 and, you know, I have basically already given them my
7 side of the story, I told them I did not want to talk
8 at all about the other families involved on this boat.

9 MR. TURRELL: Right.

10 MR. JAHNESEN: And so far it doesn't look like
11 they have printed anything, even, even close to
12 anything that is about the other families that I just,
13 you know, I kind of mentioned, I thought there were 25
14 people and I thought there were kids and older people
15 and things like that but, I did not want to go into it
16 any more than that. And they didn't put anything in
17 there. When these people are calling, is there
18 anything that I should not be saying?

19 MR. TURRELL: Well --

20 MR. JAHNESEN: Most of them, most of them I
21 have not been even calling back or anything. I talked
22 to the Baltimore Sun, was the only person that I
23 actually gave a full story to. But, not anywhere near
24 in the detail that I just talked to you guys about.

25 MR. TURRELL: Sure.

1 MR. JAHNESEN: And then the person who caught
2 me in Raleigh, was NBC, I just gave a five minute
3 interview with him. But, he said he would leave my
4 fiancee's parents alone if, if I gave an interview.

5 MR. TURRELL: Well, there, I am going to end
6 the interview right now, end the recording right now. I
7 will talk to off the record, Eric.

8 This concludes the tape portion and your
9 recorded, do you agree to that?

10 MR. JAHNESEN: Yes.

11 MR. TURRELL: Okay. Thanks.

12 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)